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# MISSIONARY HEROES COURSE

LIFE STORIES OF GREAT MISSIONARIES FOR  
TEEN AGE BOYS

ARRANGED IN PROGRAMS

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## JOHN G. PATON

*King of the Cannibals*

SOURCE BOOK

"THE STORY OF JOHN G. PATON"

By A. K. LANGRIDGE

*Program Prepared by*

FLOYD L. CARR

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BAPTIST BOARD OF EDUCATION  
DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONARY EDUCATION  
276 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

*Course No. 1*



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*Program based upon "THE STORY OF JOHN G. PATON—THIRTY  
YEARS WITH SOUTH SEA CANNIBALS"*

*Revised by A. K. LANGRIDGE*

Doran \$1.50

## FOREWORD

**T**HE *Missionary Heroes Course* for Boys meets a real need. It is a series of missionary programs for boys based on great biographies which every boy should know. Course Number One, now available, provides programs for the ensuing twelve months and may be used in the monthly meetings of boys' groups. Other courses are in preparation and will be issued for subsequent years.

It is suggested that the leader purchase three copies of each leaflet; one to be kept for reference and the other two to be cut up to provide each boy with his assigned part. In order to tie together the life incidents as they are presented by the boys, the leader should master the facts outlined in the biographical sketch and read carefully the volume upon which the program is based. These volumes are missionary classics and may be made the basis of a worth-while library of Christian adventure.

Boys are keenly interested in stories of adventure and achievement and it is hoped that participation in the programs will lead many of the lads to read these great missionary biographies. Attention is called to the eleven other life-story programs in the series now available for Course Number One, and to the series now in preparation for the ensuing year, both of which are listed on the last page. The books upon which these programs are based can be ordered from the nearest literature headquarters. Portraits of these missionary heroes will also be made available for purchase.

While these programs have been developed to meet the needs of boys' organizations of all types—*i.e.*, Organized Classes, Boy Scouts, Knights of King Arthur, Kappa Sigma Pi, etc.—they were especially prepared for the chapters of the *Royal Ambassadors*, a missionary organization for teen age boys, originating in the southland and recently adapted to the needs of the Northern Baptist Convention by the Department of Missionary Education. We commend these materials to all lovers of boys.

WILLIAM A. HILL.



## PROGRAM FOR THE MEETING

1. Scripture Lesson: Psalm 46:1-11, beginning: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."—Some of the most remarkable of the many stories of deliverance from death are found in the incidents given under items seven and eight below. (See "The Story of John G. Paton," Revised from the "Autobiography," by A. K. Langridge.)
2. Prayer.
3. Hymn: "How Firm a Foundation" (the second stanza beginning: "Fear not, I am with thee," is especially appropriate).
4. Introduction to the Life Story\* (based on pages 1-26 of the above book).
5. Enlists as a Missionary (pages 27-28).
6. Acquiring the Language (pages 33-34, 136-137, 221-222).
7. Life Imperiled Again and Again (pages 55-56, 60, 76-77, 95-96).
8. Delivered by a Tornado (pages 109-111).
9. The Site for the New Home on Aniwa (pages 134-135, 140).
10. The Sinking of the First Well on Aniwa (pages 157-159, 160, 161, 164).
11. Chief Namakei Avows His Faith in Jehovah God (pages 164-165).
12. Aniwa Adopts Christian Practices (pages 166-168).
13. The First Baptismal and Communion Services (pages 179-180).
14. The Converts Share the "Glad Tidings" (pages 190-191).
15. Progress on Aniwa Reviewed (pages 242-243).
16. "Sunset and Evening Star" (pages 252-253).

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\* The leader should read both the brief sketch in this leaflet and A. K. Langridge's "The Story of John G. Paton" in order, as the program progresses, to fill in the gaps between the assignments.

## SKETCH OF LIFE OF JOHN G. PATON, “KING OF THE CANNIBALS”

ON May 24, 1824, in Kirkmahoe, Dumfries, Scotland, John Gibson Paton was born, the eldest of twelve children. Before he was twelve years of age he worked at his father's trade of making stockings from six in the morning till ten at night. He spent his spare moments, however, in the study of Latin and Greek and finally went away to school. He taught school, worked on farms, and later worked in the Glasgow City Missions, while further pursuing his studies.

While studying in Glasgow he heard of the needs in the islands of New Hebrides and enlisted for the work. On April 16, 1858, in his thirty-fourth year, with his young wife, Mary Ann Paton, he sailed for the New Hebrides. On November 5th of the same year they landed at Port Resolution, on Tanna Island, to begin their difficult task. Nakedness, superstition, cruelty, cannibalism and misery characterized the hostile natives. Within four months his wife and babe had died of malarial fever.

Alone, save for the company of his Aneityum helpers, Abraham and his wife, he struggled to acquire the language, and to retain his equipment from pilfering hands, facing death again and again. Finally, early in 1862, tribal wars which broke out on Tanna culminated in a concerted effort to take his life and compelled his withdrawal from the island.

The next year found him back in Scotland seeking new recruits to reinforce the workers in the New Hebrides. In addition to enlisting four new missionaries he won the consent of Margaret Whitecross to become his wife and accompany him to the South Seas. In November, 1866, he began work on Aniwa, a small island fifteen miles distant from Tanna. Here again he was faced with heathenism in its sombre hues and was challenged by the task of building a home, mastering a new language and winning the good will of the hostile natives.

Probably the greatest help in breaking the back of heathenism on Aniwa was the successful sinking of a well. The natives were incredible when it was proposed and declared that “rain



could not come up from below.' At a depth of thirty-two feet an ample supply of fresh water was found and both the missionary and Jehovah-worship were vindicated. Chief Namakei, taking the well as a text, preached an eloquent sermon in which he declared his faith in Jehovah God. The tide now turns, idols are destroyed and Aniwa adopts the asking of God's blessing at every meal, morning and evening prayers, and the observance of the Lord's Day. The entire population, old and young, attends school each morning and the chiefs evolve a new social order founded upon the Bible. On October 24, 1869, Paton had the joy of administering baptism and communion to the first group of converts. Those who accepted the Gospel Message soon showed the usual evidence of sincerity in their desire to tell others the glad tidings and many volunteered for service in distant islands where their life was in constant danger.

Four years later the wreck of the *Dayspring*, the sailing vessel that served the mission stations on the several islands, turned Paton's steps toward the colonial churches in Australia, New Zealand, Victoria and New South Wales and then to the home churches in Scotland. His messages profoundly stirred the churches and the response in funds for both the purchase of a new boat and its maintenance was very gratifying. The publishing of Paton's "Autobiography," in the meantime had made him a world-hero and his messages were received with eager interest throughout Great Britain, Canada and the United States.

Two of his sons rejoiced his heart by enlisting for service in the New Hebrides, Frederick J. Paton beginning work in Malekulu in 1894 and Frank H. L. Paton in Tanna in 1896. In January, 1899, John G. Paton brought to the eager Christians in Aniwa the printed copies of the entire New Testament in Aniwa. When he made his last visit to Aniwa in 1904 he found it wholly won to Christ and reported in a letter that "we now occupy twenty-five of the thirty islands and have 17,000 natives avowedly serving Jesus as their God and Saviour."

On May 16, 1905, Margaret Whitecross Paton, the companion of his later years, passed away. He pressed on, though past his eighty-first year, visiting the colonial churches in Australia and pleading for the advancement of the Kingdom in the New Hebrides. On January 28, 1907, this dauntless hero of the cross passed to his reward. His life story is one of the precious treasures in the archives of the Christian Church.

## INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF JOHN G. PATON

*Reprinted from "The Story of John G. Paton,"*  
*by A. K. Langridge*  
*By Permission of the publishers, George H. Doran Co.*

### *Enlists as a Missionary. (P. 27-28.)*

"The Reformed Presbyterian Church, in which I had been brought up, had been advertising for a Missionary for the New Hebrides. None offered, and a cloud of sadness appeared to fall over the church synod.

"Again and again it flashed through my mind, 'Since none better qualified can be got, offer yourself'; but I deliberated and prayed for a time. I was keenly solicitous about the effect upon the hundreds of young people and others attached to my classes and meetings; and yet I felt a growing assurance that this was the call of God, and that He was willing to employ me in the work abroad, was both able and willing to provide for the on-carrying of my work at home. My medical studies, as well as my literary and divinity training, had specially qualified me in some ways for the Foreign field, and from every aspect at which I could look the whole facts in the face, the voice within me sounded like a voice from God.

"At length I called on Dr. Bates and offered myself for the New Hebrides Mission; I returned to my lodging with a lighter heart than I had for some time enjoyed, feeling that nothing so clears the vision, and lifts up the life, as a decision to move forward in what you know to be entirely the will of the Lord. I said to my fellow student, Joseph Copeland, who had chummed with me all through our course at college, 'I have been away signing my banishment; I have offered myself as a Missionary for the New Hebrides.'

"After a long and silent meditation, in which he seemed lost in thought, his answer was, 'If they will accept me, I am also resolved to go!'

"A few minutes later his letter of offer was in the post.

"Next morning Dr. Bates called upon us early, and after a long conversation, commended us and our future work to the Lord God in fervent prayer. At a meeting of the Foreign Missions Committee, held immediately thereafter, both of us were formally accepted, on condition that we passed success-



fully the usual examinations required of candidates for the Ministry. And for the next twelve months we were placed under a special committee for advice as to medical experience, acquaintance with the rudiments of trades, and anything else which might be thought useful to us in the Foreign field."

*Acquiring the Language.* (P. 33-34, 136-137, 221-222.)

"At first they came in crowds to look at us, and at everything we did or had. We knew nothing of their language; we could not speak a single word to them, nor they to us. One day I observed two men, the one lifting up one of our articles to the other, and saying, 'Nungsi nari enu?'

"I concluded that he was asking, 'What is this?' Instantly lifting up a piece of wood, I said, 'Nungsi nari enu?'

"They smiled and spoke to each other. Then they told me their name for the thing which I had pointed to. I found that they understood my question, 'What is this?' or 'What is that?' and that I could now get from them the name of things around us! We carefully noted down every name they gave us, spelling all phonetically, and also every strange sound we heard from them; thereafter, by painstaking comparison of different circumstances, we tried to ascertain their meanings, testing our own guess by again cross-questioning the natives. One day I saw two men approaching, when one, who was a stranger, pointed to me with his finger, and said, 'Se nangin?'

"Concluding that he was asking my name, I pointed to one of them with my finger, and looking at the other, inquired, 'Se nangin?'

"They smiled, and gave me their names. We were now able to get the names of persons and things, and so our ears got familiarized with the distinctive sounds of their language; and being always keenly on the alert, we made extraordinary progress in attempting bits of conversation and in reducing their speech for the first time to a written form—for the New Hebrideans had no literature, and not even the rudiments of an alphabet. I began to hire some of the more intelligent lads and men to sit and talk with us, and answer our questions about names and sounds; but they so often deceived us, and we, doubtless misunderstood them so often, that this course was not satisfactory, till after we had gained some knowledge of their language, and its construction, and they themselves had become interested in helping us.

“Our learning the language on Aniwa was marked by similar incidents to those of Tanna, related in a preceding chapter; though a few natives could understand my Tannese, and that greatly helped me. One day a man, after carefully examining some article, turned to his neighbor and said, ‘Taha tinei?’

“I inferred that he was asking, ‘What is this?’ Pointing to another article, I repeated their words; they smiled at each other, and gave me its name.

“On another occasion a man said to his companion, looking toward me, ‘Taha neigo?’ Concluding that he was asking my name, I pointed towards him, and repeated the words, and they at once gave me their names.

“It is surprising how much one can learn of any language, with these two short questions constantly on one’s lips, and with people ready at every turn to answer—‘What’s this?’ ‘What’s your name?’ Every word was at once written down, spelled phonetically and arranged in alphabetical order, and a note appended as to the circumstances in which it was used. By frequent comparison of these notes, and by careful daily imitation of all their sounds, we were able in a measure to understand each other before we had gone far in the house-building operations, during which some of them were constantly beside me.

“One incident of that time was very memorable, and God turned it to good account for higher ends. I often tell it as ‘The miracle of the speaking bit of wood’; and it has happened to other Missionaries exactly as to myself. While working at the house, I required some nails and tools. Lifting a piece of planed wood, I pencilled a few words on it, and requested our old chief to carry it to Mrs. Paton, and she would send what I wanted. In blank wonder, he innocently stared at me and said, ‘But what do you want?’

“I replied, ‘The wood will tell her.’ He looked rather angry, thinking that I befooled him, and retorted, ‘Who ever heard of wood speaking?’

“By hard pleading I succeeded in persuading him to go on. He was amazed to see her looking at the wood and then fetching the needed articles. He brought back the bit of wood, and eagerly made signs for an explanation. Chiefly in broken Tannese I read to him the words, and informed him that in the same way God spoke to us through His Book. The will of God was written there, and by and by when he learned to read, he would hear God speaking to him from its page, as Mrs. Paton heard me from the bit of wood.”



“For a long time,” he said, “no equivalent could be found, and my work of Bible translation was paralyzed for the want of so fundamental and oft-recurring a term. The natives apparently regarded the verb ‘to hear’ as equivalent to ‘to believe.’ I would ask a native whether he believed a certain statement, and his reply would be, should he credit my statement, ‘Yes, I heard it,’ but should he disbelieve it he would answer, ‘No, I did not hear it,’ meaning, not that his ears had failed to catch the words, but that he did not regard them as true. This definition of faith was obviously insufficient. I prayed continually that God would supply the missing link, and spared no effort in interrogating the most intelligent native pundits, but all in vain, none caught the hidden meaning of the word.

“One day I was in the Mission House anxiously pondering. I sat on an ordinary kitchen chair, my feet resting on the floor. Just then an intelligent native woman entered the room, and the thought flashed through my mind to ask the all-absorbing question yet once again, if possible, in a new light.

“Was I not resting on the chair? Would that attitude lend itself to the discovery?

“I said, ‘What am I doing now?’

“‘Koikae ana, Missi,’ ‘You’re sitting down, Missi,’ the native replied.

“Then I drew up my feet and placed them upon the bar of the chair just above the floor, and leaning back in an attitude of repose, asked, ‘What am I doing now?’

“‘Fakarongrongo, Missi,’ ‘You are leaning wholly, Missi,’ or ‘You have lifted yourself from every other support.’

“‘That’s it!’ I shouted, with an exultant cry; and a sense of holy joy awed me, as I realized that my prayer had been so fully answered.

“To ‘lean on’ Jesus wholly and only is surely the true meaning of appropriating or saving faith.”

*Life Imperiled Again and Again. (P. 55-56, 60, 76-77, 95-96.)*

“One morning at daybreak I found my house surrounded by armed men, and a chief intimated that they had assembled to take my life. Seeing that I was entirely in their hands, I knelt down and gave myself away body and soul to the Lord Jesus, for what seemed the last time on earth. Rising, I went out to them, and began calmly talking about their unkind treat-



ment of me and contrasting it with all my conduct towards them. I also plainly showed them what would be the sad consequences if they carried out their cruel purpose. At last some of the chiefs, who had attended the worship, rose and said, 'Our conduct has been bad; but now we will fight for you, and kill all those who hate you.'

“Grasping hold of their leader, I held him fast till he promised never to kill any one on my account. During this scene, many of the armed men slunk away into the bush and those who remained entered into a bond to be friendly and to protect us. But again their assembly resolved that we should be killed. They declared their hate for the worship, because it made them afraid to continue their present courses, and argued that if I would give up visiting the villages and praying and talking with them, they would let me stay and trade with them, as they liked the trades but hated Missionaries! I told them that the hope of being able to teach them the worship of Jehovah alone kept me living amongst them; that I was there, not for gain or pleasure, but to lead them to know and serve the only true God.

“But the heathen seldom slackened their hateful designs against my life, however calmed or baffled for the moment. Within a few days of the above events, when natives in large numbers were assembled at my house, a man furiously rushed at me with his axe; but a chief snatched a spade with which I had been working, and dexterously defended me from instant death. Life in such circumstances led me to cling very near to the Lord Jesus; I knew not, for one brief hour, when or how attacks might be made; and yet, with my trembling hand clasped in the Hand once nailed on Calvary, calmness and resignation abode in my soul.

“Next day a wild chief followed me about for four hours with his loaded musket, often directed towards me, but God restrained his hand. I spoke kindly to him, and attended to my work as if he had not been there, fully persuaded that God had placed me there, and would protect me till my allotted task was finished. I left all to His hands, and felt immortal till my work was done. Trials and hairbreadth escapes strengthened my faith, and seemed only to serve me for more to follow; and truly they did tread swiftly upon each other's heels. The abiding consciousness of the presence and power of my Saviour preserved me from losing my reason. His words, 'Lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the world,' became to me so real that it would not have startled me to behold Him, as Stephen did, gazing down upon the scene. It is the sober truth, and it comes back to me sweetly after all the years, that I had my

nearest and dearest glimpse of the Face and smile of my blessed Lord in those dread moments when musket, club, or spear was being levelled at my life.

“One day while toiling away at my house, the war chief and his brother and a large party of armed men surrounded the plot where I was working. They all had muskets besides their own native weapons. They watched me for some time in silence, and then every man levelled a musket straight at my head. Escape was impossible. Speech would have only increased my danger. My eyesight came and went for a few moments. I prayed to my Lord Jesus, either Himself to protect me or to take me home to His Glory. I tried to keep working on at my task, as if no one was near me. In that moment, as never before, the words came to me—‘Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, I will do it’; and I knew that I was safe. Retiring a little from their first position, no word having been spoken, they took up the same attitude somewhat farther off, and seemed to be urging one another to fire the first shot. But, restrained once again, they withdrew, leaving me with a new reason for trusting God with all that concerned me for Time and Eternity. New Year’s Day, 1861, will ever be remembered.

“Mr. and Mrs. Johnston, Abraham and I, had spent nearly the whole time in a kind of solemn yet happy festival. Anew in a holy covenant before God we unitedly consecrated our lives and our all to the Lord Jesus, giving ourselves away to His blessed service for the conversion of the heathen in the New Hebrides. After evening family worship, Mr. and Mrs. Johnston left my room to go to their own house, only some ten feet distant; but he returned to inform me that there were two men at the window, armed with huge clubs, and having black painted faces. Going out to them and asking them what they wanted, they replied, ‘Medicine for a sick boy.’ With difficulty I persuaded them to come in and get it. At once, it flashed upon me that they had come to murder us. Mr. Johnston had also accompanied us into the house. Keeping my eye constantly fixed on them, I prepared the medicine and offered it. They refused to receive it, and each man grasped his killing-stone. I faced them firmly and said, ‘You see that Mr. Johnston is now leaving and you two must leave for to-night. To-morrow, you can bring the boy or come for the medicine.’

“Seizing their clubs, as if for action, they showed unwillingness to withdraw, but I walked deliberately forward and made as if to push them out when both turned and began to leave.

“Mr. Johnston had gone in front of them and was safely out,



but he bent down to lift a little kitten that had escaped at the open door; and at that moment one of the savages, jerking in behind, aimed a blow with his huge club, in avoiding which Mr. Johnston fell with a groan to the ground. Both men sprang towards him, but our two faithful dogs ferociously leaped in their faces and saved his life. Rushing out, but not fully aware of what had occurred, I saw Mr. Johnston trying to raise himself, and heard him cry, 'Take care! These men have tried to kill me and they will kill you!'

"Facing them sternly I demanded, 'What is it that you want? He does not understand your language. What do you want? Speak with me.' Both men thereon raised their great clubs and made to strike me; but quick as lightning the two dogs sprang at their faces and baffled their blows. One dog was badly bruised, and the ground received the other blow, that would have launched me into Eternity. The best dog was a little cross-bred retriever, with terrier's blood in him, splendid for warning us of approaching dangers, and which had already been the means of saving my life several times. Seeing how matters stood, I now hounded both dogs furiously upon them, and the two savages fled.

"In their flight, a large body of men who had come eight or ten miles to assist in the murder and plunder came slipping here and there from the bush and joined them, fleeing too. . . .

"We durst not choose the usual path along the beach, for there our enemies would have quickly overtaken us. We entered the bush in the hope of getting away unobserved. But a cousin of Miaki, evidently secreted to watch us, sprang from behind a bread fruit tree, and swinging his tomahawk, aimed at my brow with a fiendish look. Avoiding it, I turned upon him and said in a firm, bold voice, 'If you dare to strike me, my Jehovah God will punish you. He is here to defend me now!'

"The man, trembling, looked all around to see the God who was my defender, and the tomahawk gradually lowered at his side. With my eye fixed upon him I gradually moved backwards in the track of the teachers and God mercifully restrained him from following me." . . .

### *Delivered by a Tornado. (P. 109-111.)*

"During the day, on 3rd February, a company of Miaki's men came to the Mission House, and forced Mrs. Mathieson to show them through the premises. Providentially, that morning



I was writing in an inner room. They went through every other room in the house and did not see me. Concluding I had gone inland, they discharged a musket into our teacher's house, but afterwards left quietly, greatly disappointed at not finding me. My heart still rose in praise to God for another such deliverance, neither by man nor of man's planning!

“Worn out with long watching and many fatigues, I lay down that night early, and fell into a deep sleep. About ten o'clock the savages again surrounded the Mission House. My faithful dog, Clutha, clinging still to me amid the wreck of all else on earth, sprang quietly upon me, pulled at my clothes, and awoke me, showing danger in her eye glancing at me through the shadows. I silently awoke Mr. and Mrs. Mathieson, who had fallen asleep. We committed ourselves in hushed prayer to God and watched. Immediately a glare of light fell into the room! Savages passed with flaming torches. First they set fire to the church all round, and then to a reed fence connecting the church and the dwelling house. In a few minutes the house, too, would be in flames, and armed savages waiting to kill us on attempting an escape!

“Taking my harmless revolver in the left hand and a little American tomahawk in the right, I pled with Mr. Mathieson to let me out, and instantly again to lock the door on himself and wife. He very reluctantly did so, holding me back and saying, ‘Stop here and let us die together! You will never return!’

“I said, ‘Be quick! Leave that to God! In a few minutes our house will be in flames, and then nothing can save us.’

“He did let me out, and locked the door again quickly from the inside; and, while his wife and he prayed and watched from within, I ran to the burning reed fence, cut it from top to bottom, and tore it up and threw it back into the flames, so that the fire could not by it be carried to our dwelling-house. I saw on the ground shadows, as if something were falling around me, and started back. Seven or eight savages had surrounded me, and raised their great clubs in air. I heard a shout—‘Kill him! kill him!’ One savage tried to seize hold of me, but, leaping from his clutch, I drew the revolver from my pocket and levelled it as if for use, my heart going up in prayer to my God. I said, ‘Dare to strike me, and my Jehovah God will punish you. He protects us, and will punish you for burning His church, for hatred to His worship and people, and for all your bad conduct. We love you all; and for doing you only good you want to kill us. But our God is here now to protect us.’

“They yelled in rage, and urged each other to strike the first blow, but the Invisible One restrained them.

“At this dread moment occurred an incident which I trace directly to the interposition of God. A rushing and roaring sound came from the south, like the noise of a mighty engine or of muttering thunder. Every head was instinctively turned in that direction, and they knew, from previous hard experience, that it was one of those awful tornadoes of wind and rain. Now, mark, the wind bore the flames away from our dwelling-house; had it come in the opposite direction, no power on earth could have saved us from being consumed! It made the work of destroying the church only that of a few minutes; but it brought with it a heavy and murky cloud, which poured out a perfect torrent of tropical rain. Now, mark again, the flames of the burning church were thereby cut off from extending to and seizing upon the reeds and the bush; and, besides, it had become almost impossible now to set fire to our dwelling-house.

“The mighty roaring of the wind, the black cloud pouring down unceasing torrents, and the whole surroundings, awed the savages into silence. Some began to withdraw from the scene, all lowered their weapons of war, and several, terror-struck, exclaimed, ‘That is Jehovah’s rain! Truly their Jehovah God is fighting for them and helping them. Let us away!’

“A panic seized upon them; they threw away their remaining torches, and in a few moments they had all disappeared in the bush, and I was left alone, praising God for His marvellous works. ‘O taste and see that God is good! Blessed is the man that trusteth in Him!’

### *The Site for the New Home on Aniwa. (P. 134-135, 140.)*

“Sorrowful experience on Tanna had taught us to seek the site for our Aniwa house on the highest ground, and away from the malarial influences near the shore. There was one charming mound, covered with trees whose roots ran down into the crevices of coral, and from which Tanna and Erromanga are clearly seen. But there the natives, for some superstitious reason, forbade us to build, and we were constrained to take another rising ground somewhat nearer the shore. In the end, this turned out to be the very best site on the island for us, central and suitable every way. But we afterwards learned that perhaps superstition also led them to sell us this site, in the malicious hope that it would prove our ruin. The mounds on the top, which had to



be cleared away, contained the bones and refuse of their cannibal feasts for ages. None but their sacred men durst touch them; and the natives watched us hewing and digging, certain that their gods would strike us dead! That failing, their thoughts may probably have been turned to reflect that after all the Jehovah God was stronger than they.

“In levelling the site and gently sloping the sides of the ground for good drainage purposes, I had gathered together two large baskets of human bones. I said to a chief (in Tannese), ‘How do these bones come to be here?’

“And he replied, with a shrug worthy of a cynical Frenchman, ‘Ah, we are not Tanna-men! We don’t eat the bones!’

“The site being now cleared, we questioned whether to build only a temporary home, hoping to return to dear old Tanna as soon as possible, or, though the labour would be vastly greater, a substantial house. We decided that we would make it the very best we could. We planned two central rooms, sixteen feet by sixteen, with a five-foot wide lobby between, so that other rooms could be added when required. About a quarter of a mile from the sea, and thirty-five feet above its level, I laid the foundations of the house. Coral blocks raised the wall about three feet high all round. Air passages carried sweeping currents underneath each room, and greatly lessened the risk of fever and ague. A wide trench was dug all round, and filled up as a drain with broken coral. At back and front, the veranda stretched five feet wide; and pantry, bath-room and tool-house were partitioned off under the veranda behind. The windows sent to me had hinges; I added two feet to each with wood from Mission boxes, and made them French door-windows, opening from each room to the veranda. And so we had, by God’s blessing, a healthy spot to live in, if not exactly a thing of beauty!” . . . A native described the situation as follows:

“When Missi (John G. Paton) came we saw his boxes. We knew he had blankets and calico, axes and knives, fish-hooks and all such things. We said, ‘Don’t drive him off, else we will lose all these things. We will let him land. But we will force him to live on the Sacred Plot. Our Gods will kill him, and we will divide all that he has amongst the men of Aniwa.’ But Missi built his house on our most sacred spot. He and his people lived there, and the gods did not strike. He planted bananas there, and we said, ‘Now, when they eat of these they will all drop dead, as our fathers assured us, if any one ate fruit from that ground, except only our Sacred Men themselves.’ These bananas ripened. They did eat them. We kept watching for



days and days, but no one died! Therefore what we say, and what our fathers have said, is not true. Our gods cannot kill them. Their Jehovah God is stronger than the gods of Aniwa.”

*The Sinking of the First Well in Aniwa. (P. 157-159, 160, 161, 164.)*

“Aniwa, having therefore no permanent supply of fresh water, in spring or stream or lake, and my own household also suffering sadly for lack of fresh water, I resolved by the help of God to sink a well near the Mission premises, hoping that a wisdom higher than my own would guide me to the source of some blessed spring. Of the scientific conditions of such an experiment I was comparatively ignorant; but I counted on having to dig through earth and coral above thirty feet, and my constant fear was that, owing to our being so near to the sea-shore, the water, if water I found, could only be salt water after all my toil! Still, I resolved to sink that shaft in hope, and in faith that the Son of God would be glorified thereby.

“One morning I said to the old chief and his fellow-chief, ‘I am going to sink a deep well down into the earth, to see if our God will send us fresh water up from below.’

“They looked at me with such astonishment, and said in a tone of sympathy approaching to pity: ‘O Missi! Wait till the rain comes down, and we will save all we possibly can for you.’

“I replied, ‘We may all die for lack of water. If no fresh water can be got, we may be forced to leave you.’

“The old chief looked imploringly, and said, ‘O Missi! you must not leave us for that. Rain comes only from above. How could you expect our island to send up showers of rain from below?’

“I told him, ‘Fresh water does come up springing from the earth in my land at home, and I hope to see it here also.’

“The old chief grew more tender in his tones, and cried, ‘O Missi, your head is going wrong; you are losing something, or you would not talk wild like that! Don’t let our people hear you talking about going down into the earth for rain, or they will never listen to your word or believe you again.’

“But I started upon my hazardous job, selecting a spot near the Mission Station and close to the public path, that my prospective well might be useful to all. I began to dig, with my pick and spade and bucket at hand, an American axe for a hammer and crowbar, and a ladder for service by and by. The good old chief now told off his men in relays to watch me, lest

I should attempt to take my own life, or do anything outrageous, saying, 'Poor Missi! That's the way with all who go mad. There's no driving of a notion out of their heads. We must just watch him now. He will find it harder to work with pick and spade than with his pen, and when he's tired we'll persuade him to give it up.'

"I did get exhausted sooner than I expected, toiling under that tropical sun; but we never own before the natives that we are beaten; so I went into the house and filled my vest pocket with large, beautiful English-made fish-hooks. These are very tempting to the young natives, as compared with their own—skilfully made though they be out of shell, and serving their purposes wonderfully. Holding up a large hook, I cried, 'One of these to every man who fills and turns over three buckets out of this hole!'

"A rush was made to get the first turn, and back again for another and another. I kept those on one side who had got a turn, till all the rest in order had a chance, and bucket after bucket was filled and emptied rapidly. Still the shaft seemed to lower very slowly, while my fish-hooks were disappearing very quickly. I was constantly there, and took the heavy share of everything, and was thankful one evening to find that we had cleared more than twelve feet deep—when lo! next morning, one side had rushed in, and our work was all undone.

"The old chief and his best men now came around me more earnestly than ever. He remonstrated with me very gravely. He assured me for the fiftieth time that rain would never be seen coming up through the earth on Aniwa! . . .

"Steeping my poor brains over the problem, I became an extemporised engineer. Two trees were searched for, with branches on opposite sides, capable of sustaining a cross tree betwixt them. I sank them on each side firmly into the ground, passed the beam across them over the centre of the shaft, fastened thereon a rude home-made pulley and block, passed a rope over the wheel, and swung my largest bucket to the end of it. Thus equipped, I began once more sinking away at the well, but at so great an angle that the sides might not again fall in. Not a native, however, would enter that hole, and I had to pick and dig away till I was utterly exhausted. But a native teacher, in whom I had confidence, took charge above, managing to hire them with axes, knives, etc., to seize the end of the rope and walk along the ground, pulling it till the bucket rose to the surface, and then he himself swung it aside, emptied it, and lowered it down again. I rang a little bell which I had with



me, when the bucket was loaded, and that was the signal for my brave helpers to pull their rope. And thus I toiled on from day to day, my heart almost sinking sometimes with the sinking of the well, till we reached a depth of about thirty feet. And the phrase, 'living water,' 'living water,' kept chiming through my soul like music from God, as I dug and hammered away!

"At this depth the earth and coral began to be soaked with damp. I felt that we were nearing water. My soul had a faith that God would open a spring for us; but side by side with this faith was a strange terror that the water would be salt. So perplexing and mixed are even the highest experiences of the soul; the rose-flower of a perfect faith, set round and round with prickly thorns. One evening I said to the old chief, 'I think that Jehovah God will give us water to-morrow from that hole!' . . .

"Next morning, I went down again at daybreak, and sank a narrow hole in the centre about two feet deep. The perspiration broke over me with uncontrollable excitement, and I trembled through very limb, when the water rushed up and began to fill the hole. Muddy though it was, I eagerly tasted it, lapping it with my trembling hand, and then I almost fell upon my knees in the muddy bottom as my heart burst up in praise to the Lord. It was water! It was fresh water! It was living water from Jehovah's well! True, it was a little brackish, but nothing to speak of; and no spring in the desert, cooling the parched lips of a fevered pilgrim, ever appeared more worthy of being called a Well of God than did that water to me!

"The chiefs had assembled with their men near by. They waited on in eager expectancy. It was a rehearsal, in a small way, of the Israelites coming round, while Moses struck the rock and called for water. By and by, when I had praised the Lord, and my excitement was a little calmed, the mud being also greatly settled, I filled a jug, which I had taken down empty in the sight of them all, and ascending to the top called for them to come and see the rain which Jehovah God had given us through the well. They closed around me in haste, and gazed on it in superstitious fear. The old chief shook it to see if it would spill, and then touched it to see if it felt like water. At last he tasted it, and rolling it in his mouth with joy for a moment, he swallowed it, and shouted, 'Rain! Rain! Yes, it is Rain! But how did you get it?'

"I repeated, 'Jehovah, my God, gave it out of His own earth



in answer to our labours and prayers. Go and see it springing up for yourselves!’ . . .

“Very strangely, though the natives themselves have since tried to sink six or seven wells in the most likely places near their different villages, they have either come to coral rock which they could not pierce, or found only water that was salt. And they say amongst themselves, ‘Missi not only used pick and spade, but he prayed and cried to his God. We have learned to dig, but not how to pray, and therefore Jehovah will not give us the rain from below!’ ” . . .

### *Chief Namakei Proclaims His Faith in Jehovah God.* (P. 164-165.)

“When the well was finished and neatly fenced in, the old chief said, ‘Missi, I think I could help you next Sabbath. Will you let me preach a sermon on the well?’

“‘Yes,’ I at once replied, ‘if you will try to bring all the people to hear you.’

“‘Missi, I will try,’ he eagerly promised. The news spread like wildfire that the Chief Namakei was to be Missionary on the next day for the worship, and the people, under great expectancy, urged each other to come and hear what he had to say.

“Sabbath came round. Aniwa assembled in what was, for the island, a great crowd. Namakei appeared dressed in shirt and kilt. He was so excited, and flourished his tomahawk about at such a rate, that it was rather lively work to be near him. I conducted short opening devotions, and then called upon Namakei. He rose at once, with eye flashing wildly, and his limbs twitching with emotion. He spoke to the following effect, swinging his tomahawk to enforce every eloquent gesticulation:

“‘Friends of Namakei, men and women and children of Aniwa, listen to my words! Since Missi came here he has talked many strange things we could not understand—things all too wonderful; and we said regarding many of them that they must be lies. White people might believe such nonsense, but we said that the black fellow knew better than to receive it. But of all his wonderful stories, we thought the strangest was about sinking down through the earth to get rain! Then we said to each other, The man’s head is turned; he’s gone mad. But the Missi prayed on and wrought on, telling us that Jehovah God heard and saw, and that his God would give him rain. Was he mad? Has he not got the rain deep down there all the same? We have laughed at other things which the Missi told us, because

we could not see them. But from this day I believe that all he tells us about his Jehovah God is true. Some day our eyes will see it. For to-day we have seen the rain from the earth.'

"Then, rising to a climax first the one foot and then the other making the broken coral on the floor fly behind like a warhorse pawing the ground, he cried with great eloquence:

" 'My people, the people of Aniwa, the world is turned upside down since the work of Jehovah came to this land! Who ever expected to see rain coming up through the earth? It has always come down from the clouds! Wonderful is the work of this Jehovah God. No god of Aniwa ever answered prayers as the Missi's God has done. Friends of Namakei, all the powers of the world could not have forced us to believe that rain could be given from the depths of the earth, if we had not seen it with our eyes, felt it and tasted it as we here do. Now, by the help of Jehovah God, the Missi brought that invisible rain to view, which we never before heard of or saw, and'—beating his hand on his breast, he exclaimed:

" 'Something here in my heart tells me that the Jehovah God does exist, the Invisible One, whom we never heard of nor saw till the Missi brought Him to our knowledge. The coral has been removed, the land has been cleared away, and lo! the water rises. Invisible till this day, yet all the same it was there, though our eyes were too weak. So I, your chief, now firmly believe that when I die, when the bits of coral and the heaps of dust are removed which now blind my old eyes, I shall then see the invisible Jehovah God with my soul, as Missi tells me, not less surely than I have seen the rain from the earth below. From this day, my people, I must worship the God who has opened for us the well, and who fills us with rain from below. The gods of Aniwa cannot hear, cannot help us, like the God of Missi. Henceforth I am a follower of Jehovah God. Let every man that thinks with me go now and fetch the idols of Aniwa, the gods which our fathers feared, and cast them down at Missi's feet. Let us burn and bury and destroy these things of wood and stone, and let us be taught by the Missi how to serve the God who can hear, the Jehovah, who gave us the well, and who will give us every other blessing, for He sent His Son Jesus to die for us and bring us to Heaven. This is what the Missi has been telling us every day since he landed on Aniwa. We laughed at him, but now we believe him. The Jehovah God has sent us rain from the earth. Why should He not also send us His Son from Heaven? Namakei stands up for Jehovah!' " . . .



*Aniwa Adopts Christian Practices. (P. 166-168.)*

“One of the very first steps in Christian discipline to which they readily and almost unanimously took was the asking of God’s blessing on every meal and praising the great Jehovah for their daily bread. Whosoever did not do so was regarded as a heathen. The next step, and it was taken in a manner as if by some common consent that was not less surprising than joyful, was a form of family worship every morning and evening. Doubtless the prayers were often very queer, and mixed with many remaining superstitions; but they were prayers to the great Jehovah, the compassionate Father, the Invisible One—no longer to gods of stone!

“Necessarily these were the conspicuous features of our life as Christians in their midst—morning and evening Family Prayer and Grace at Meat; and hence, most naturally, their instinctive adoption and imitation of the same as the first outward tokens of Christian discipline. Every house in which there was not Prayer to God in the family was known thereby to be heathen. This was a direct and practical evidence of the New Religion; and, so far as it goes (and that is very far, indeed, where there is any sincerity beneath it), the test was one about which there could be no mistake on either side.

“A third conspicuous feature stood out distinctly and at once—the change as to the Lord’s Day. Village after village followed in this also the example of the Mission House. All ordinary occupations ceased. Sabbath was spoken of as the Day for Jehovah. Saturday came to be called ‘Cooking Day,’ referring to the extra preparations for the coming day of rest and worship. They believed that it was Jehovah’s will to keep the first day holy. The reverse was a distinctive mark of heathenism.

“The first traces of a new social order began to rise visibly on the delighted eye. The whole inhabitants, young and old, now attended school—three generations sometimes at the one copy or A B C book! Thefts, quarrels, crimes, etc., were settled now, not by club law, but by fine or bonds or lash, as agreed upon by the chiefs and their people. Everything was rapidly and surely becoming ‘new’ under the influence of the leaven of Jesus. Industry increased. Huts and plantations were safe. Formerly every man, in traveling, carried with him all his valuables; now they were secure, left at home.

“In heathen days, by way of contrast, a brood of fowls or a litter of pigs would be carried in bags lest they should be stolen. Hence at church we had sometimes lively episodes, the chirruping of chicks, the squealing of piggies, and the barking of

puppies, one gaily responding to the other, as we sang, or prayed, or preached the Gospel! Being glad, in those days, to see the natives there, even with all their belongings, we carefully refrained from finding fault; but the thread of devotion was sometimes apt to slip through one's fingers, especially when the conflict of the owner to silence a baby pig inspired the little wretch to drown everything in a long-sustained and high-pitched scream.

“The natives found this state of things troublesome to themselves and disagreeable all round. They called a General Assembly, at which dishonesty was unanimously condemned and fines, etc., were instituted. The chiefs, no doubt, found this a long and difficult task, but they held at it under the inspiration of the Gospel, and prevailed. Even the trials and difficulties with which they met were overruled by God, in assisting them to form by the light of their own experience a simple code of social laws, fitted to repress the crimes there prevailing, and to encourage the virtues specially needing to be cultivated. Heathen worship was gradually extinguished; and, though no one was compelled to come to church, every person on Aniwa, without exception, became ere many years an avowed worshipper of Jehovah God. Again:

“ ‘O Galilean, Thou hast conquered!’ ”

### *The First Baptism and Communion Services. (P. 179-180.)*

“And this leads me to relate the story of our first communion on Aniwa. It was Sabbath, 24th October, 1869; and surely the angels of God and the Church of the Redeemed in Glory were amongst the ‘great cloud of witnesses’ who eagerly ‘peered’ down upon the scene—when we sat around the Lord’s Table and partook the memorials of His body and blood with those few souls rescued out of the heathen world. My communicants’ class had occupied me now a considerable time. The conditions of attendance at this early stage were explicit, and had to be made very severe, and only twenty were admitted to the roll. At the final examination only twelve gave evidence of understanding what they were doing, and of having given their hearts to the service of the Lord Jesus. At their own desire, and after every care in examining and instructing, they were solemnly dedicated in prayer to be baptized and admitted to the Holy Table. On that Lord’s Day, after the usual opening service, I gave a short and careful exposition of the Ten Commandments and of the Way of Salvation according to the Gos-



pel. The twelve candidates then stood up before all the inhabitants there assembled, and, after a brief exhortation to them as converts, I put to them the two questions that follow, and each gave an affirmative reply, 'Do you in accordance with your profession of the Christian Faith, and your promises before God and the people, wish me now to baptize you?'

"And—'Will you live henceforth for Jesus only, hating all sin and trying to love and serve your Saviour?'

"Then beginning with the old chief, the twelve came forward, and I baptized them one by one. Solemn prayer was then offered, and in the name of the Holy Trinity the Church of Christ on Aniwa was formally constituted. I addressed them on the words of the Holy Institution—I. Corinthians 11:23—and then, after the prayer of Thanksgiving and Consecration, administered the Lord's Supper—the first time since the Island of Aniwa was heaved out of its coral depths! Mrs. McNair, my wife and myself, along with the six Aneityumese teachers, communicated with the newly baptized twelve. And I think, if ever in all my earthly experience, on that day I might truly add the blessed words—'Jesus in the midst.'

"The whole service occupied nearly three hours. The Islanders looked on with a wonder whose unwonted silence was almost painful to bear. Many were led to inquire carefully about everything they saw, so new and strange. For three years we had toiled and prayed and taught for this. At the moment when I put the bread and wine into those dark hands, once stained with the blood of cannibalism, but now stretched out to receive and partake the emblems and seals of the Redeemer's love, I had a foretaste of the joy of glory that well-nigh broke my heart to pieces. I shall never taste a deeper bliss till I gaze on the glorified face of Jesus Himself."

### *The Desire of the Converts to Tell Others the "Glad Tidings."* (P. 190-191.)

"A heathen has been all his days groping after peace of soul in dark superstition and degrading rites. You pour into his soul the light of Revelation. He learns that God is love, that God sent His Son to die for him, and that he is the heir of Life Eternal in and through Jesus Christ. By the blessed enlightenment of the Spirit of the Lord he believes all this. He passes into a third heaven of joy, and he burns to tell everyone of the Glad Tidings. Others see the change in his disposition, in his character, in his whole life and actions; and amid such sur-

roundings, every convert is a burning and shining light. Even whole populations are thus brought into the outer court of the Temple; and islands, still heathen and cannibal, are positively eager for the missionary to live amongst them and would guard his life and property now in complete security, where a very few years ago everything would have been instantly sacrificed on touching their shores! They are not Christianized, neither are they civilized, but the light has been kindled all around them, and though still only shining afar, they cannot but rejoice in its beams. But even when the path is not so smooth, nor any welcome awaiting them, native converts show amazing zeal. For instance, one of our chiefs, full of the Christ-kindled desire to see and to save, sent a message to an island chief, that he and four attendants would come on Sabbath and tell them the Gospel of Jehovah God. The reply came back sternly forbidding their visit, and threatening with death any Christian that approached their village. Our chief sent in response a loving message, telling them that Jehovah had taught the Christians to return good for evil, and that they would come unarmed to tell them the story of how the Son of God came into the world and died in order to bless and save His enemies. The heathen chief sent back a stern and prompt reply once more, 'If you come, you will be killed.'

“On Sabbath morning, the Christian chief and his four companions were met outside the village by the heathen chief, who implored and threatened them once more. But the former said, 'We come to you without weapons of war! We come only to tell you about Jesus. We believe that He will protect us to-day.'

“As they steadily pressed forward towards the village, spears began to be thrown at them. Some they evaded, being all, except one, most dexterous warriors; and others they literally received with their bare hands, striking them and turning them aside in an incredible manner. The heathen, apparently thunderstruck at these men thus approaching them without weapons of war, and not even flinging back their own spears which they had turned aside, desisted from mere surprise, after having thrown what the old chief called 'a shower of spears.' Our Christian chief called out, as he and his companions drew up in the midst of them on the village public ground:

“‘Jehovah thus protects us. He has given us all your spears! Once we would have thrown them back at you and killed you. But now we come not to fight, but to tell you about Jesus. He has changed our dark hearts. He asks you now to lay down all



these your other weapons of war, and to hear what we can tell you about the love of God, our great Father, the only living God.' ”

*The Progress Reviewed in His Last Letter from Aniwa.*  
(P. 242-243.)

His last letter dated from Aniwa is June, 1904. He had just concluded a visit to some of the other Mission Stations, notably West Tanna. The hospital there and other evidences of the steady inroad that was being made on the inveterate heathenism of Tanna greatly encouraged him.

“It was,” he said, “a feast of real joy to see that my long-cherished prayer may yet be fulfilled—‘the New Hebrides with its every island, tribe, and native for Jesus and His Glory.’ We now occupy twenty of its thirty islands, and have 17,000 natives avowedly serving Jesus as their God and Saviour; of these 330 are consecrated to the work as teachers and evangelists.

“I was at Nguna on a Sabbath morning, and had the privilege of addressing an audience of 600 Christian natives in a church built by the Rev. Peter Milne, their veteran Missionary. What a marvellous work God has enabled him to do on and around Nguna!”

*“Sunset, and Evening Star and One Clear Call for Me.”*  
(P. 252-253.)

It was a holy privilege to be present when some aged minister, bowed under an almost equal weight of years, came to talk and pray with him. If anyone spoke of past achievements as a theme of comfort it only pained him, but when some old white-haired saint spoke to him of the Sinner’s Refuge, the look of pain melted into an indescribable glow of tenderness and love as he murmured, “Precious Jesus.” It was in the Crucified Saviour that his heart rested in such unutterable peace.

Many ministers and friends came from far and near to see him, and their visits cheered him. He was always vexed when anyone was allowed to go away without a brief look into the sick-room. When he was reminded that his pain and weakness were too great to allow him to see visitors, he would say:

“Oh, but it was so kind of them to come, and I would just like to shake hands. It will not do me any harm.”

On the morning of the 25th of January, the Missionary thought he was dying. He asked his son Frank to come nearer,

and then poured out his heart in fervent prayer for all his children and their children, pleading that all might be gathered home to the Glory, "not one wanting." It was a patriarchal benediction, more precious than the wealth of the whole world.

On Sunday evening the patient became unconscious, and it was soon apparent that the end was drawing near. The watchers beside the bed bore him up in silent prayer. The final struggle was distressing, and it was hard to see one suffer for whom they would gladly have borne any pain.

Just after one o'clock on Monday, the 28th of January, 1907, John G. Paton passed away.

In a moment, as if by the Invisible Hand of the Great Father Himself, the lines of pain were smoothed out and a look of heavenly peace suffused the pale features. He had seen his "Precious Jesus," and the afterglow of that glorious vision was reflected in his face. The watchers felt that they were on holy ground, and a great tenderness and awe filled their souls, as they stood at the brink and beheld.



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